

# Cessna 172N, G-BRAK

**AAIB Bulletin No:** Ref: EW/G2001/04/09 **Category:** 1.3

**Aircraft Type and Registration:** Cessna 172N, G-BRAK  
**No & Type of Engines:** 1 Lycoming O-320-D2J piston engine  
**Year of Manufacture:** 1980  
**Date & Time (UTC):** 16 April 2001 at 1033 hrs  
**Location:** Bodmin Airfield, Cornwall  
**Type of Flight:** Private  
**Persons on Board:** Crew - 1 - Passengers - 1  
**Injuries:** Crew - None - Passengers - None  
**Nature of Damage:** Bent propeller, front wheel spat, rear spar port wing  
**Commander's Licence:** Private Pilot's Licence  
**Commander's Age:** 43 years  
**Commander's Flying Experience:** 108 hours (of which 13 were on type)  
Last 90 days - 4 hours  
Last 28 days - 4 hours  
**Information Source:** Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot

The aircraft was being flown from Kemble to Lands End airfield in Cornwall. The weather for the flight was: wind northerly 10 to 15 kt, cloud BKN at 3,000 feet with an OAT of +7° C. As the aircraft approached Hartland Point, the pilot decided to make a short stop at Bodmin airfield to answer a call of nature. The pilot was experiencing poor RT reception with St Mawgan ATC and changed frequency to Bodmin Radio. The reception on that frequency also deteriorated and the pilot had some difficulty in locating Bodmin airfield. He contacted the Distress and Diversion cell and was given a bearing and distance for Bodmin, which assisted him in locating the airfield. The pilot was not content with the first approach and carried out a go around, landing off his second approach.

The pilot visited the tower to book in, and book out, for his flight to Lands End and was informed that the extended threshold of Runway 32 was boggy and that he should start his take-off run adjacent to the marker board. He was also advised that the left-hand side of the grass runway was firmer than the right. The pilot had decided not to select flap for take-off as he considered adequate distance was available. After satisfactory power checks had been carried out, full power was selected against the brakes and the take-off roll was started. The aircraft was very slow to accelerate and at about the runway intersection the airspeed was still less than 40 kt and it was

obvious to the pilot that the take-off should be aborted. The pilot closed the throttle and applied the brakes. He was unable to bring the aircraft to a halt and believed he started to skid, because the aircraft went off the left side of the runway and did not respond to his braking inputs. The pilot transmitted a "Mayday" distress call and tried to steer the aircraft back to the right, gently enough not to break the nose landing gear. At low speed the aircraft propeller struck a hedge and the pilot shut down the engine and vacated the aircraft through the normal exit. The airfield Rescue and Fire Fighting Service (RFFS) attended the scene immediately.

The pilot concluded that the lack of acceleration and poor braking was probably due to the wet grass runway surface. The CAA General Aviation Safety Sense leaflet, 7B, Aeroplane Performance provides valuable information on operations from poor surfaces such as long or wet grass.